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The Colonnade

LONGWOOD COLLEGE

Farmville, Virginia



Fall, 1960

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From the Editor:

Who are you and what do you want? College provides in a very real sense the opportunity to ponder these questions and to reach some conclusions concerning them. One means of facing these questions is creative expression. The contributors to this issue of the *Colonnade* are unconsciously or deliberately examining phases of the society in which we live or attempting to understand human beings and, ultimately, themselves. What they have to say deserves your attention, for you too are challenged. Faust knew what he wanted. Jefferson did too. Christ knew. Khrushchev knows. Who are you? What do you want?

—J. V. D.



The Cover

In one of the Platonic dialogues, Socrates suggests to Ion of Epheus, who declared himself unequalled as a reciter and exponent of Homer, that his power of interpretation was not of his own doing but a gift from the gods. He continues to develop an idea concerning this divine inspiration by imagining a chain of iron rings. As a magnet attracts these rings and puts the same power into them, they attract other rings so that sometimes there is a whole string of rings hanging together.

So the Muse, Plato writes, inspires not only the poet but, through him, others who dangle as in a string, linking inspiration, creation, and interpretation.

The *Colonnade* has on its cover a contemporary interpretation of Plato's chain by Lee Burnette. It is a pleasing design; and moreover, may serve to suggest the linking of author and audience that a literary magazine requires.

Colonnade Sketches

As an artist, Lee Burnette is critical, versatile, and certain. The same description applies to her as a student and person, as well.

Lee, a senior art major from Amelia, Virginia, has contributed cover designs and illustrations to the *Colonnade*, which she serves as art editor. Her own taste in art leans toward the French impressionists, for example, Monet and Manet, and towards watercolors. Her musical taste includes a variety of forms, the only thing she does not like being "the very, very classical."

Concerning the creation of her art Lee explained, "I usually have an idea in mind. Then I just sit down and complete it."

During the past summer, Lee toured Europe. She states confidently that her most outstanding memory is of the time spent at the Louvre in Paris. Lee was most impressed with the European's attitude toward art. "Art," she stated, "is almost taken for granted. Rembrandt's are a part of everyday life."

Upon graduation Lee plans to teach art and is also looking forward to completing some sketches she started in Europe.

* * * *

Lillie B. Rogers, poetry editor of the *Colonnade*, is a senior English major from Blackstone.

A frequent contributor to the magazine, Lillie completes most of her work after many middle-of-the-night inspirations. The following day, she says, she takes "great delight in discovering just what it was that she created in semi-darkness." This, she feels, is the best way to work, for she dislikes "mechanical" poetry, and finds that her sudden inspirations produce free-flowing, rather than structural poetry.

Enjoying the modern poets, Lillie finds the cleverness of E. E. Cummings quite pleasing. However, there is also a place in her collection for the mysticism of William B. Yeats and the quaint thoughts of Emily Dickinson.

In art, Lillie's tastes range from a great love of the modern works of Picasso to a respect for the Renaissance masters. Her taste in music also covers a quite liberal range, for she likes "Duke Ellington immensely, and still, I love almost all of Mozart's pieces."

After graduation, Lillie plans to teach English, and further her interest in literature by developing a method of applying the interpretations she learns from her students, to those she has learned herself. This, she feels, will be a good way to develop a method of compromising between what is thought to be correct, and what is taught to be correct.

ALL IN A NIGHT'S WORK

Crickets clink together
like numerous needles
of sewing machines.

The warm night air
presses down on the treadles
of these imagined machines.

Stitching ceaselessly,
they promise a product
at night's end.

The heat of air and crickets subsides
as the quiet after a craft
is finished and passed
for other improvement.

Dew-dotted, the grass
lies limply like laundered cloth
while the metal gray dawn grows red
at the horizon
like an iron
which will soon make plants
stand starchily.

—LA VERNE COLLIER



THE CAMPUS CLOWN

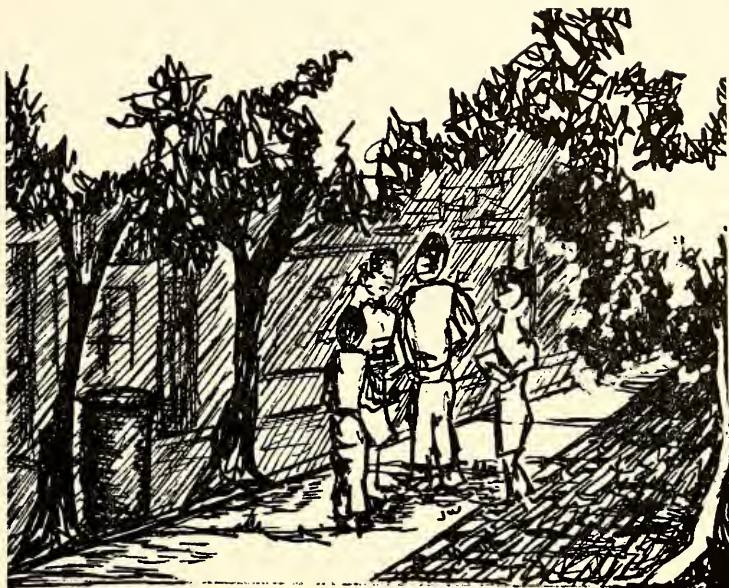
by Mary Byrd Micou

IT is spring, my twentieth one. Spring is special, even at Laurel View School (for girls only). Yesterday evening my roommate Phyl—which is short for Phyllis, which she hates—and I sat on the brick wall under the big trees in front of the gym, smoking and talking about it—you know, about spring and how it makes you feel. Phyl is going to be a famous doctor someday when she finishes school. Phyl's lucky, about her ambition I mean. She doesn't worry about international problems and materialism and morality, but just about finishing school so she can cure people's sickness. I would like to be a writer but I'll probably get married. Everybody does.

Anyway, Phyl and I were sitting on the wall last night watching the street-light shadows of trees on the sidewalk and smelling the fresh-cut grass, when Helen Gates and Dodie Gibbs joined us. Dodie is a sophomore and is forever getting into trouble with Miss Bailey the housemother in addition to small misunderstandings with the Student Council, the Dormitory Rules Committee, and the night watchman. Everybody laughs at Dodie; she'd be known as our Campus Clown if Laurel View girls could use such an unladylike term in public. Helen is Dodie's shadow. She follows her absolutely everywhere. Poor Helen thinks Dodie can do no wrong, and has fifteen weeks of restricted privileges to show for it. Honestly, sometimes I could just shake her for being such a spineless martyr.

Well, the four of us sat and talked for a while, and after Dodie bummed her fourth cigarette from Phyl we decided to walk to the Campus Cabin and buy some more. The Cabin is a little snack shop in the village, which is what the Laurel View School catalogue is referring to when it says, "... conveniently close to cultural activities of the surrounding communities." Walking down Main Street of the village is rather like posing for a magazine picture of the "sleepy little college town." You've seen trees arching over old sidewalks with several college students standing around in chummy little groups in the foreground. When we got inside the Cabin, we found a table and ordered Cokes. Everybody goes to the Cabin for Cokes in the evening.

Pretty soon somebody discovered a deck of cards, and we played bridge. Dodie is a terrible bridge player and Phyl is a fanatic on the subject, so our games are always nerve-wracking, but we never give it up. Bridge is a favorite pastime at Laurel View. We played until the Saint Thomas College tennis team came in and Sid Brooks and Chet Baker and three other boys I didn't know invited themselves to join us. Sid is captain of the tennis team at Saint Tom's which is about five miles outside the village, and he and I grew up in the same home town.



Chet is known by every girl at Laurel View and dates a chosen few. We play tennis together sometimes. I introduced everybody and we met the three best tennis players at Saint Thomas next to Sid and Chet—according to Chet. Well, Scotty Somebody took one look at Helen and they started getting to know each other. We danced and played cards—at least Sid, Chet, Dodie, Phyl, and the other two best tennis players at Saint Thomas did—Helen and Scotty What's-his-name just smiled at each other and talked. And all of a sudden I realized that Helen looked more than pretty when she smiled at him. And Dodie, who is always cute around anybody of the opposite sex, became cuter and very loud.

We planned a picnic for next weekend, the nine of us. All the Laurel View girls and Saint Thomas boys go on picnics in the spring, by the old mill just outside the village. The boys walked us back to school, and it was a beautiful night.

It was only 10:30 so Helen and Dodie came to Phyl's and my room and we played bridge again. We teased Helen about Scotty and talked about our picnic. Dodie couldn't keep still. Phyl, who always keeps her mind on the cards, couldn't help laughing at her imitations of Chet. Finally Miss Bailey threatened us with expulsion if we didn't get quiet, and we decided to go to bed.

Then very late last night a funny thing happened. I woke up thirsty, and the dorm was full of that strange silence of a building

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ANIMAL SPIRITS

His laughter runs round and round
rattling up and down
like a jouncing, giggling
horse on a musically giggling
carousel.

He catches a ride
on the horse,
and feels the slide
of laughing
rising and falling
in the throat.

Rising again,
 it strikes against the teeth,
 reverberating rhythmically, starting again
 at its origin.

This cycled, circled ride
continues until
the breath halts
like the heaving of the horse against
pellets of broken sunlight.
He sees himself
in the center of
the carousel mirror,
horse merged with himself
a senseless centaur.
Image laughs at image
going nowhere specifically.

—LA VERNE COLLIER

ODE TO KEROUAC

come with me, weakling
 into my world of tranquillizers and daydreams
 and vulgar illusions of virile men like animals
 in black pants and shaggy haircuts.
dimly lit cafes
 filled with stale cigarette smoke
 where acrid human odors permeate the senses.
dancers in the sandaled feet
 swaying to primitive rhythms of Africa
 lightly covered breasts, freely moving hips
two cigarettes touch in the dark.
 wine more wine
spinning in the whirlpool of passion.
 strong sinews and hairy legs
 in the bed at night . . .
 not caring who they belong to.

—REBECCA WILBURN

Ellen Glasgow's IRON VEIN

by Jean Pollard

ELLEN GLASGOW, who was born on April 22, 1873, in Richmond, Virginia, inherited from her mother the qualities of gentle living in Tidewater society; and from her father, a stern Scotch-Irish Calvinist, she received a portion of fortitude and determination. As a child because of ill health and later as an adult because of partial deafness, she withdrew from society into herself. On the surface she assumed strength and hardness, but within, her life was one of self-pity and sentimentality. It was only in her writing that she displayed the fortitude and determination that are a part of the indomitable iron vein. Still, the vein of iron was of great importance in her life, because she wanted so badly to possess it as a means of protection from life and because her study of the iron vein resulted in her two greatest literary achievements, *Barren Ground* and *Vein of Iron*.

What is the iron vein? It is a composite of many things found within the heart and soul of certain human beings. It is not a religious faith, nor is it a form of philosophy. It is composed of stubborn resolve, obstinate pride, common sense, rigid determination, and self-reliance. It is also characterized by hope, courage, energy, reserve, efficiency. The iron vein is the fortitude and strength that enables certain people to endure all things. This endurance does not insure happiness or peace, only existence and survival.

Ellen Glasgow devoted two novels to the study of the effect of the iron vein on those possessing it. In 1925 *Barren Ground* was published, and ten years later *Vein of Iron* was published. Although both novels are laid in Virginia, they possess a universal appeal, because they are about human beings and human conflict.

Dorinda Oakley is the character in *Barren Ground* who has the iron vein. Coming from a pitifully poor family, her life was only monotonous routine until she fell in love with Jason Greylock, a young doctor with a brilliant future. Dorinda and Jason had sexual intercourse prior to marriage, but before they could be married, Jason was forced to marry another woman. Since Dorinda was pregnant, she received a tremendous emotional shock upon learning of Jason's marriage. First there was an agony of mental pain, then panic over her situation, and finally hate for the man who had put her in this situation. When Dorinda confronted Jason and attempted to kill him, she saw him for the first time as he really was—a weakling and a coward. Realizing this, she despised and hated him, but after the initial shock was over,

her emotions dissolved into indifference. "There were women, she knew, who could love even when they hated; but she was not one of these. The vein of iron in her nature would never bend, would never break, would never melt completely in any furnace."

Through the whole of this experience and despair Dorinda existed and endured only by means of the strength she drew from the iron vein. She knew that "deep down in her, beneath the rough texture of experience, her essential self was still superior to her folly and ignorance, was superior even to the conspiracy of circumstances that hemmed her in. And she felt that in a little while the essential self would reassert its power and triumph over disaster. Vague, transitory, comforting, this premonition brooded above the wilderness of her thoughts. Yes, she was not broken. She could never be broken while the vein of iron held in her soul."

With the help of her iron vein, Dorinda built a satisfying, if not completely happy, life from the ruins of a disillusioned and betrayed love. Dorinda went to New York to have her baby, but as the result of an accident, she suffered a miscarriage. After working several years in a doctor's office, she returned to her home in Virginia. She became obsessed with the idea of turning the worn-out family farm into a productive dairy farm. She put herself into her work, and it prospered. She married Nathan Pedlar, a wealthy widower with several children, not out of love, but out of fear of a lonely old age. Jason led a miserable life, lost everything he owned, and eventually drank himself to death. When Nathan and Dorinda obtained possession of Five Oaks, Jason's farm, Dorinda's victory and Jason's degradation were complete.

Dorinda Oakley was a strange woman. In her hour of despair she found no comfort in religious faith or in her family. She never gave in to self-pity, yet she ceased living and only existed for many months. At length emotion crept back into her parched nature, but her capacity for love had been deadened forever. Dorinda was a strong person, yet she was hard. She had awakened to life with a cruel jolt; all her idealism and illusions had been swept away with one blow. She had come to believe that "for most people life is just barren ground where they have to struggle to make anything grow."

For Dorinda life was barren, but as time passed the vein that had brought her through her experience returned the will to live to her. She put her heart and mind into the land and worked with unmatched determination to make her dairy farm a success. The farm became her one absorbing, vital interest, and her work proved to be a means of reawakening to life. "The farm belonged to her, and the knowledge aroused a fierce sense of possession. To protect, to lift up, rebuild, and restore, these impulses formed the deepest obligation her nature could feel."

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IRON VEIN

Gradually the numbness left her being, and she began to experience more and varied feelings, but she never again became a well balanced person emotionally. When her mother died, she cried, not from grief, but because it was expected of her. When, after nine years of marriage, Nathan was killed in a train accident, she missed him, but she was happier after his death than ever before. Perhaps the most human emotion she possessed was the pity she felt for Jason in his last years. Although her emotions were unbalanced, she managed, because of her iron vein, to meet life on its own terms. She did not conquer, but neither was she defeated. "She never entirely abandoned her futile effort to find a meaning in life. Hours had come and gone when she had felt that there was no permanent design beneath the fragile tissue of experience; but the moral fiber that had stiffened the necks of martyrs lay deeply embedded in her character, if not in her opinions. She was saved from the aridness of infidelity by that robust common sense which had preserved her from the sloppiness of indiscriminate belief. After all, it was not religion; it was not philosophy; it was nothing outside her own being that had delivered her from evil. The vein of iron which had supported her through adversity was merely the instinct older than herself, stronger than circumstances, deeper than the shifting surface of emotion, the instinct that had said, 'I will not be broken.'" This then is the iron vein as it existed in Dorinda's soul. True, it did not bring her happiness, but through it she found serenity of mind.

In *Vein of Iron* the iron vein appears as the same type of strong willed, enduring quality as in *Barren Ground*. Still, the circumstances surrounding the character who possesses it and the effect of the vein in the life and personality of the character are very different. In this novel Ada Fincastle is the character who possesses the iron vein. Ada grew up in an atmosphere of love in a closely knit family. Her family was a member of the very poor, vanishing Southern aristocracy. From early childhood she and Ralph McBride were constant companions, and as young people they fell in love. Before they were married, Janet Rowan, a spoiled liar, claimed that she was pregnant and that Ralph was responsible. Although Ralph was innocent and denied the accusation, he was forced to marry her. Ralph, like Jason Greylock, was a weakling, but he was weak to a lesser degree.

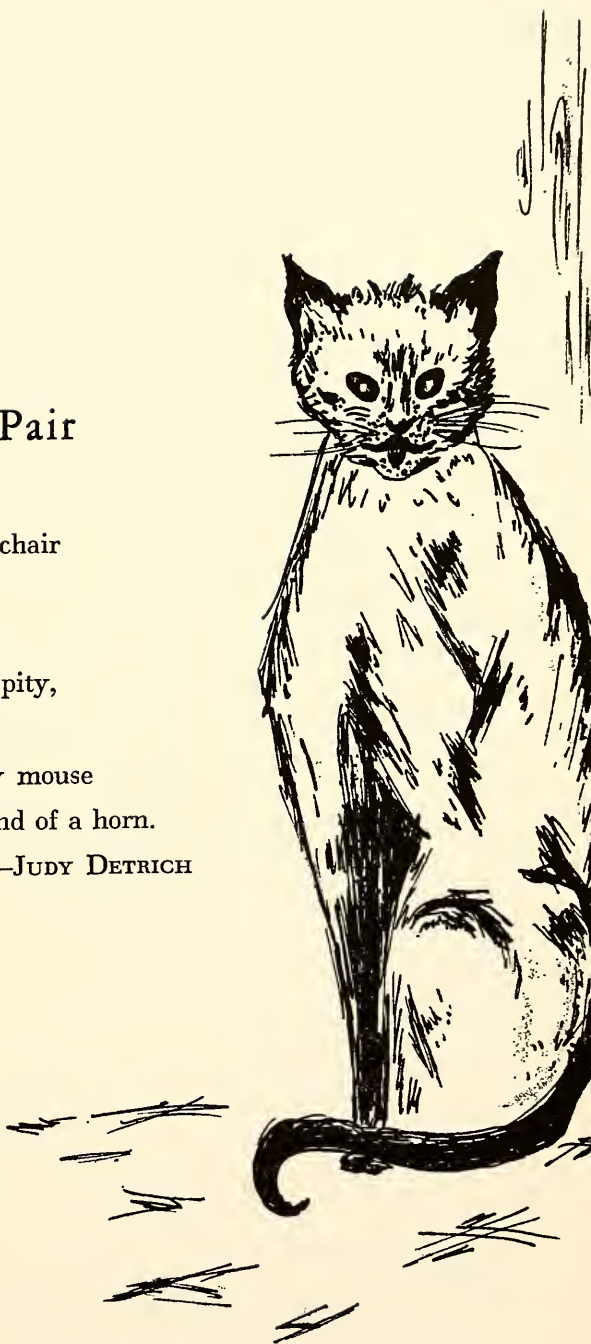
For six years, with the constancy characteristic of the iron vein, Ada remained faithful to Ralph, while his wife was seeing other men. Just before being sent to France in World War I, Ralph came to Ada and asked her to go away with him for three days. His wife was in the process of getting a divorce, and he brought up the possibility of his being killed in the war without their ever knowing the joy of the ful-

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light in a Parallel Pair

like you, my sleek fat cat.
ou there upon the ladderback chair
eming to be what I feel,
sdainful, surveying the room.
ntellectual snob, superior rogue pity,
ity us, you and I cat.
or you scamper after the dirty mouse
nd I leave my books at the sound of a horn.

—JUDY DETRICH



FORECAST

by Susan Crisman

I was glad to be away from the city for awhile, happy to bathe in the fresh air and good, clean dirt of the countryside. The clouds sailing above me were the whitest I'd seen for a long time. Honeysuckle and clover scented the air with a perfume unequalled in any shoppe.

Feeling very young again, I left the road and took off my shoes to walk in the cool, cushiony grass. I walked aimlessly, almost suddenly finding myself standing before a majestic weeping willow. From within the graceful, drooping branches, I heard a melancholy chirping, and upon closer inspection, spied a mockingbird perched upon a tiny nest. Suddenly, the flutter of wing or breath of wind pushed something from the nest. The mockingbird flew downward with the object in futile attempt to rescue. I stepped around the tree to solve the mystery, and discovered a tiny, white, speckled egg safely lodged in the lap of a young girl.

She was unaffected by our abrupt encounter. "Look at my gift from Heaven." She smiled, and spoke as if I were an old friend. "Won't you sit with me awhile?" The mockingbird lighted on the ground, gazed at us for a moment, then flew quickly away.

"Thank you." I watched the sun begin its descent toward the horizon. This is the peace I'd like to know always!

"Do you see those trees over there?" She pointed. I looked as she told me of a beautiful meadow which lay beyond them. "David is there. We quarrelled, and I left him there. I walked to this tree so that I'd be too far away to hear or see him for awhile. Don't you think that I did the sensible thing?"

She smiled as I suggested that she save her quarrelling for rainy days. To her, I was jesting. Unhappiness does belong to cold, damp days and nights.

I listened to her story to forget my own past sorrows. As she spoke, she delicately fingered the tiny egg. Her hands were unused to hard work, I imagined. Her light organdy dress matched the hue of the tree. Her eyes, too, were soft and green.

I listened to the faint wail of a passing train.

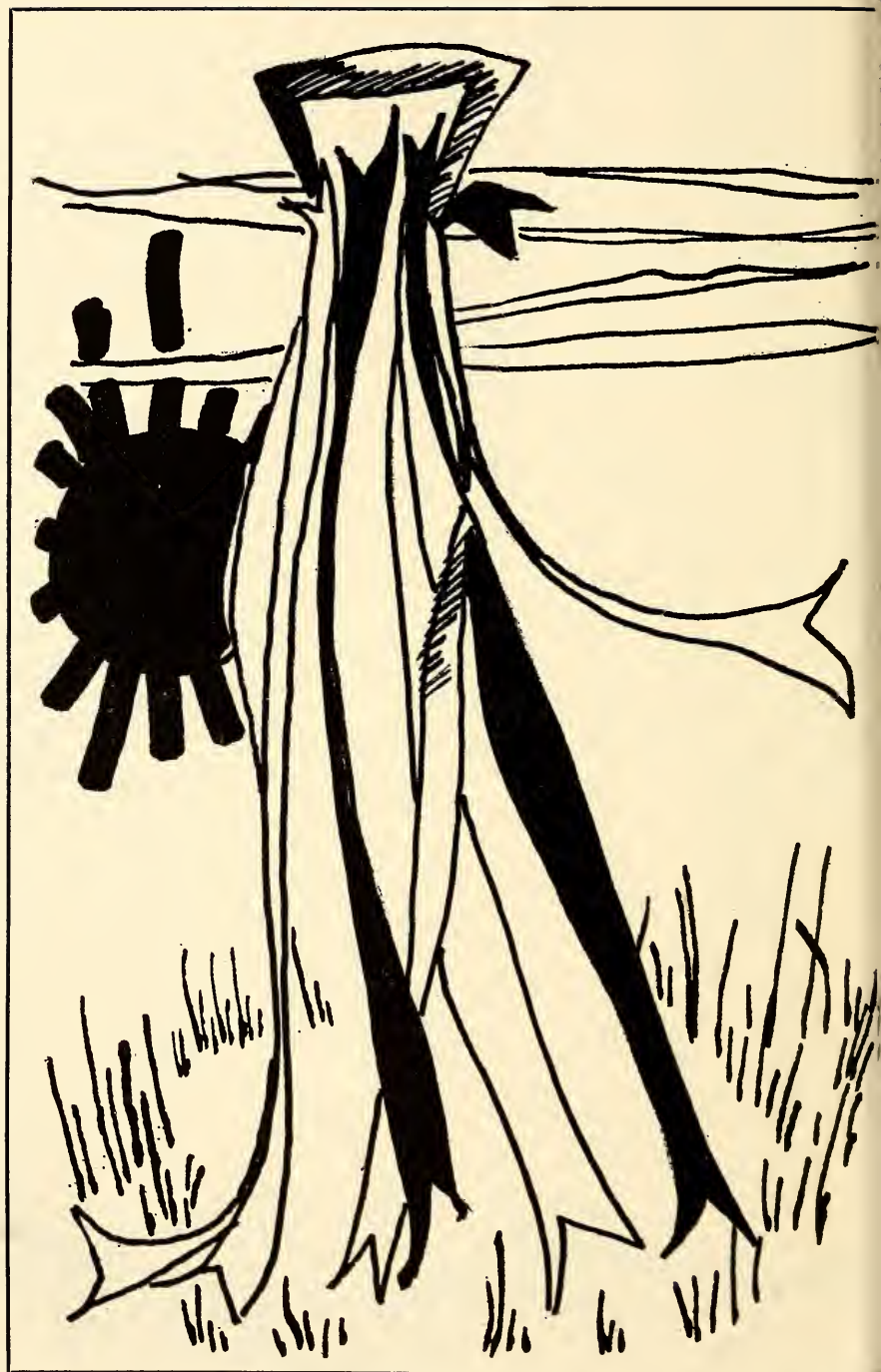
"I cried when he told me about that other woman. It was cruel . . . and wrong," she added. Her eyes flashed.

Perhaps only to me was my loss greater than hers. She hadn't lost him forever. Only Death could make that stipulation, as I knew too well. "Perhaps if you went back now that you've both had a chance to think . . ."

"He has nothing more to say to me, nor I to him. He couldn't hear me anyway. The only voices he'll listen to are God's and the angels!" The speckled egg cracked with the sudden jerk of her hand.

The sun was low on the horizon now, and a chill breeze was blowing. I put on my shoes, arose, and walked back toward the city, thinking pleasant thoughts to forget a nagging headache.





MAY DANCE

I'll not dance around your maypole
holding your pastel answers like silly streamers
while I trounce around
bound by the circular figure
of my repeated path.
I'm making mathematical notations of nothingness,
perfect zeros, scored
by my fevered footprints,
through the green heat of hot blades of grass.
Last October, I remember
I scuffed through yellow leaves,
wet with rain,
crinkled and soggy as breakfast cereal,
making no impressions.

—LA VERNE COLLIER

Learn How to Write From the Experts

Each year, faint-hearted freshmen sink lower into oblivion as a result of their English theme grades. In fact, many a tender heart has been broken by the sight of a torn and bleeding composition. In line with its policy of encouraging new writers, the *Colonnade* here shows how three published writers would have fared at the hands of the English Department, if samples of their best work had been submitted as theme assignments.

Theme #1

"Barn Burning" by William Faulkner

The slow constellation wheeled on. It would be dawn and then sun-up after a while and he would be hungry. But that would be tomorrow and now he was only cold, and walking would cure that. His breathing was easier now and he decided to get up and go on, and then he found that he had been asleep because he knew it was almost dawn, the night almost over. He could tell that from the whipporwill's.

ambiguous

circled words unnecessary repetitions

I doubt this!

C- , immature style, too wordy

Theme # 2

The Red Badge of Courage by Stephen Crane

In the air, always, was a mighty swell
of sound that it seemed could sway the earth.
With the courageous words of the artillery
and the spiteful sentences of the musketry
mingled red cheers. And from this region
of noises came the steady current of the maimed.
One of the wounded men had a shoe full of blood.
He hopped like a schoolboy in a game. He
was laughing hysterically.

oh, valley?

such delicate
unsuspicious
is in your
hand

avoid
artificial
elaboration

An inconclusive
ending...

Dr, your characters
always seem to be
fighting something -
too much emphasis
on the physical

Theme # 3

"My One Wild Night" by Joan Ghosh

A vigorous, emphatic beginning

That night I packed my bag, and next morn-
ing I told Mom and Dad good-bye. They hated
to see me go. They looked tired and old and
sad. I couldn't blame them for the way things
turned out for Nell and me, the way we had messed
up our lives by letting sex lure us to destruc-
tion. Have time!

understandable

sharp
attention

A This is the kind of
hard-hitting, down-
to-earth experience
that interests publishers.
Have you thought of
submitting it to the
Colonnade?



HOW HIS GARDEN GREW

A seasoned, fashionable gardener attempted
to plant and to carefully cultivate
a superior variety from his own seeds of words.
He grew a gaudy dome of a pumpkin
too quickly, and
the vines, superfluous and serpentine, slithered
around him
like bestial creatures crawling
from an unknown crevice.
Then, the beasts burrowed through all the earth,
and his garden rasped
with sounds of palsied gourds.
Pods drooped from stalks
like withered, hanged bodies.
All are aged, dead and callow in beauty
and have nothing to say.

—LA VERNE COLLIER

A COOL PLACE

Sands stretch away
into platinum paved miles
of deceptive wealth of desert.
Each sand grain, a jeweled glare
hypnotically lying
on the sweep of slopes
like oncoming sleep.
Depth of desert grows more spacious:
a Dali day
of the repetitious yonder of horizon.
Ego on its caravan
imagines an oasis
to bathe in and then
admire its reflection.

—LA VERNE COLLIER

HOW THE GRASS GREW

EDITOR'S NOTE: *The following story was awarded first place in the Virginia Highland Festival, literary contest, sponsored by the Virginia Division of the Association of American University Women. Its author, a longtime fashioner of children's tales, is Mary Beth Olsen.*

ONCE upon a time there was a little kingdom hidden high in the mountains—Eutopia was its name. It lay nestled in a small valley. No one who lived in Eutopia had ever seen the land beyond the snow-capped mountains.

Upon one of the slopes of the mountain stood a large, greystone castle with high towers, a moat, and a golden draw-bridge. In the huge castle lived King Tinsle and his handsome young son, Prince Linstrom. They were surrounded by many servants who carried out the king's every wish.

"Bring me my pipe!" the king would bellow, and a servant would scurry out of the royal throne room to find the king's royal silver pipe.

"Bring me a rosy red apple, and a sour persimmon, and a ripe fig!" he would shout, and three of his loyal servants would scurry out to fulfill the king's wish.

"Wash behind Prince Linstrom's ears!" he would scream, and a servant would appear with a bowl of scalding hot water and a silk washcloth.

Each year on May the second, the entire kingdom would gather in the small village for the Royal Flower Contest. Many, many, many years before the good King Tinsle had sat upon the royal throne, a wise old king had declared that May the second would be a Royal Holiday—one on which a flower would be chosen to represent the entire tiny kingdom.

"All those who reside in my domain will plant the flower chosen by me, and the entire kingdom shall be covered with only that flower which I choose!" the wise old king had declared.

Every king who had lived in the huge, grey castle and sat upon the royal throne since that time had observed May the second as a Royal Holiday.

Each May the second the king had dressed in his royal purple robes, crossed the golden draw-bridge, and entered the town.

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PARTI PRIS

A splash of butterflies split
the silent pool of sky, sailing
in the warm currents like frigid Vikings finding
and lolling in a Samoan sea.
Their wings, like shields, dip into
the air in a motion like oars, ladling up
the warm waves of atmosphere.
From my north window, they seem warriors
bred for beauty. Yet, I run
to the ground to grab
these sailors gleaming
in the sun's glare; I discover
at prow's end,
their ugly sea serpent faces.

—LA VERNE COLLIER

THE CAMPUS CLOWN (continued from page 9)

that is never quiet. I walked to the water fountain at the end of the hall, and was nearly frightened out of my skin by a noise. It was the muffled sound a person makes when he is crying into a pillow—I've heard it before. The sound was coming from Helen's and Dodie's room. I thought of Helen and Scotty and walked up to the door, and I stopped there. Helen wasn't crying. It was Dodie, and her sobs stifled in that pillow were awful. I didn't say anything, but walked back to my room and went to bed. I couldn't sleep though; I lay for a long time thinking about Dodie crying. I won't even tell Phyl.

This morning after classes I walked to the mailbox with Phyl. On the front steps of the Post Office, Dodie was entertaining a hilarious group with a description of Helen and Scotty at the Cabin, while Helen stood in the background with an embarrassed smile. Phyl chuckled and waved to Dodie and Helen. But I couldn't laugh.



FRAGMENT

thought flown—
 mood transgressed,
feeling unknown,
 moment unpossessed—
go back now to capture—
 and know not half the rapture
of thought unwritten
 emotion unspoken
 and passion unspent.

—KIMBI

fillment of their love. Ada, realizing full well what she was doing, consented to go with him. After Ralph had gone, Ada discovered that she was pregnant. Plunged into the situation of unwed motherhood, Ada knew despair and mental agony. With the exception of Grandmother Fincastle, her family was understanding, and she remained at home in Ironside to bear her child. Through the period of her pregnancy she depended on the iron vein for her strength. Because she did not want to add worry to Ralph's burden, she refused to write him about her condition. Ralph knew nothing of her situation until after Ada's son was born.

Due to urgent financial pressures Ada, her baby, her aunt, and her father moved to the city of Queensborough. Ada went to work, and her father, a philosopher and former minister, taught in order to support the family. When the war was over, Ralph returned and married Ada. As a whole the family was happy and secure until the Depression struck. At the beginning of the Depression, Ralph was seriously injured in an automobile accident, while he was out for the first time with another woman. A spinal injury made him an invalid for many months. The accident kept him faithful to Ada, but the added expense put the family in a serious financial situation. Somehow the family managed to get by. When Ralph had finally recovered, Ada's father, having made a journey back to Ironside, died. Things at last began to look up for the McBrides, when Ralph found a permanent job in Ironside. Ada and Ralph planned to buy back the Old Manse, the Fincastle family home, and to make their home in Ironside. Both Ralph and Ada realized the fullness of their love, and they were surrounded with hope for a better future.

Like Dorinda, Ada had drawn upon the strength of the iron vein while bearing a child born out of wedlock. However, Dorinda hated Jason and wanted her child only if it could be all hers with nothing of Jason. On the other hand, Ada loved Ralph in spite of what had happened, and wanted to have his child. Dorinda had become a hard, bitter, and cynical woman, while Ada had remained more normally human. Ada was disillusioned and disappointed many times, but she never became hard and bitter. Ada's iron vein was more a blend of magnificent courage and fortitude that enabled her to endure her bad moments in life. "The vein of iron far down in her inmost being, in her secret self, could not yield, could not bend, could not be broken."

During all the financial hardships and Ralph's illness, Ada drew strength from the iron vein in her character. Ada's marriage was by no means perfect, but with the help of the vein she and Ralph made it lasting. Unlike Dorinda, who found only peace, Ada found peace,

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happiness, and the promise of a good life with the man she loved.

In the companion books, *Barren Ground* and *Vein of Iron*, Miss Glasgow used the theme of conflict between human will and fate as the basis for a thorough analysis of the inner strength possessed by certain individuals. However, she leaves unanswered in the minds of sensitive readers the question as to whether or not the iron vein is a desirable characteristic. The iron vein brings endurance, but life should call for more than endurance. The greatest defeat often lies in victory and the greatest victory in defeat. In spite of the iron vein, Dorinda and Ada were defeated in victory. The vein gave them strength in defeat, but it prevented their knowing the joy of being strengthened by others. Although Ellen Glasgow's own personal life was just such a defeated victory, in terms of her work, her life was successful. These two novels, *Barren Ground* and *Vein of Iron* will always stand as a testimonial to her creative and artistic excellence.

A THOUGHT

The same beginning,
Identical end.
But between
Birth and death
Man differs from man.

—DONNA HUMPHLETT

HOW THE GRASS GREW (continued from page 24)

Each May the second he had walked up and down the village square looking at all of the flowers grown with loving care by his humble subjects. Each May the second he had selected the most original and most beautiful flower of the kingdom. For a year the kingdom would be covered with only the Royal Flower. One year the countryside had been covered with tulips; another year there had been violets; another year there had been lilies. The winner of the contest received a prize of all the gold that he could carry.

For fifty years King Tinsle had dressed in his royal robes and called for his royal coach with six white horses. For fifty years he had crossed the golden draw-bridge and driven into the village to judge the Royal Flower Contest.

One fateful year, however, the entire kingdom was in mourning—the sound of weeping filled the valley, for the good king lay ill in his royal chambers.

“Bring me the royal hot water bottle!” he screamed as he pulled the royal blankets up to his nose.

“Bring me the royal aspirin!” he cried as he pulled the royal blankets up to his ears.

“Bring me Prince Linstrom!” he shouted as he pulled the royal blankets over his head.

The servants scuttled to and fro carrying the royal aspirin, the royal hot water bottle, and at last the royal prince, who had been playing jacks in the royal game room.

“Yes, Father?” said the prince as he bowed low. “How are you, Father?” he asked politely.

“I am fine, my boy! Linstrom, as you know, tomorrow the Royal Flower Contest is to take place.”

“Yes, Father,” said the prince as he bowed once more.

“I am an old man now, Linstrom, and soon it will be your royal duty to wear the royal robes and ride in the royal coach down to the village to choose the Royal Flower,” the king said as he pulled the royal blankets down to his ears.

“Yes, Father,” said the little prince as he bowed again.

“Linstrom, you will choose the flower tomorrow, for I cannot,” the king said as he pulled the royal blankets down to his nose.

“Yes, Father,” the prince replied bowing.

Far away on another slope of the mountain there lived a young girl—Elena by name. She lived in a small, white house with her mother, her father, and her thirteen younger brothers and sisters. For many years the family had been very, very poor—so poor that Elena had no shoes on her small feet.

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HOW THE GRASS GREW

Each day Elena would rise early and go into the forest to pick mushrooms. The mushrooms grew throughout the large, dark forest, and sometimes Elena would stay all day gathering them. The mushrooms were sold to the kind old magician, Grassinkle, of the mountain.

Many, many years ago his great, great, great, great grandfather (a wicked sorcerer) had been banished from the village because he had turned the king into a cabbage. The wicked sorcerer had slunk away to the mountains and made his home in a cold, damp cave.

The village had long since forgotten the sorcerer, and the people did not know of his great, great, great great grandson who still lived in the mountain cave. Elena was the only one who knew him and she loved him very much. Whenever her mother would bake a Teezeleberry pie, Elena would steal away with her piece of pie and dart up the path to the cave.

"I love Teezeleberry pie," Grassinkle, the magician, would say as he gulped down the pie.

All through the year Elena had tried to grow an original and beautiful flower. She had worked every evening in her tiny, rocky garden. All that year the weeds had grown up and choked the little plants.

If she could only win the prize her family would be so happy. Her father could have Teezeleberry pie for breakfast, lunch, and supper.

One morning she carried her basketful of mushrooms up the path to the cave of Grassinkle.

"Good-morning, Elena," he growled as he stirred the contents of the black kettle on the fire.

"Good-morning, Grassinkle," she replied. "Here are the fresh mushrooms."

"Thank you," he said gruffly.

"Grassinkle, I cannot grow an original and beautiful flower. I have tried ever so hard, but all I can grow are weeds. If I could only win the prize, Father could have Teezeleberry pie for breakfast, lunch, and supper," said Elena as she began to cry.

"Well, my dear Elena, why didn't you say something sooner? I certainly should be able to help you," said Grassinkle as he grinned at her. "Now dry your eyes."

"Let me consult my magic potions," he mumbled as he opened a large cupboard filled with shelves full of small bottles of every size, shape, and color imaginable.

"I need a magic potion," he muttered as he pulled on his white beard.

"Little bat wings and giant frog's legs!" he exclaimed. "I have just the thing!" From the third shelf he pulled a bottle—a bottle no larger than Elena's thumb.

HOW THE GRASS GREW

"My dear," said Grassinkle to Elena, "take this and at midnight pour the contents of the bottle on a small pot of dirt. Close your eyes, turn around three times, and wish for the most original and beautiful plant ever seen."

"Oh thank you, Grassinkle. I shall be forever grateful to you," she cried as she skipped down the path carrying the small bottle.

At midnight Elena climbed from her bed and slipped quietly down the narrow stairs. She opened the door and stepped out onto the porch. She took out the bottle and poured the liquid into the red pot of dirt. She closed her eyes, turned around three times, and thought.

"What is the most original plant I have ever seen? They are all green. They all have leaves and flowers. My goodness, I've never seen a plant in Eutopia without a flower. That's it! I wish for a plant without a flower," she cried delightedly.

She opened her eyes cautiously and looked at the pot.

"Why nothing has happened!" she cried. Tears began to roll down her cheeks and as they fell they landed on the little red pot.

Suddenly—before her very eyes—little green shoots appeared! They grew and grew and grew until soon they filled the pot. Only slender little green leaves could be seen. There were no flowers!

Elena was overjoyed. She took the little red pot and carried it into the house. She placed it on the window sill so that the morning sun could reach it, and then she lay down upon the rug and went to sleep.

At the castle Prince Linstrom sat in the royal game room bemoaning his fate. "But I don't want to judge the contest. I sneeze, and sniffle, and my eyes water whenever there are flowers about," moaned the unhappy prince, and his eyes began to water at the thought of the many flowers at the contest.

"Bring me the royal doctor!" bellowed the king from his royal chambers.

"Bring me the royal thermometer!" he groaned as he snuggled far under the covers.

Elena awoke early and dressed with special care. Her mother packed a small basket with dry biscuits and a large slice of Teezeleberry pie for lunch. At last Elena started down the slope toward the town carrying her red pot.

"Good-bye!" called her mother, her father, and her thirteen brothers and sisters. She waved to them and continued to walk.

After several hours of steady walking she arrived at the village—tired and dusty. She seated herself upon the curb and opened her lunch. As she was completing her Teezeleberry pie she heard the trumpets announcing that the Royal Flower Contest had begun. She swallowed hurriedly and walked to the village square with her entry.

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HOW THE GRASS GREW

All about the square were the beautiful flowers and the gay dresses of the villagers. The royal coach drawn by six magnificent white horses halted at the foot of the square.

"Hail, King Tinsle!" cried the people. "Hail the king!"

The royal coachman leaped from his seat and opened the silver door.

"Oh!" gasped the villagers as the prince stepped onto the square dressed in the royal robes.

"Hail, Prince Linstrom!" they shouted as they clapped and cheered.

Prince Linstrom smiled and blinked his eyes.

"Achooooo!" he sneezed. "Achooooo! Achooooo!"

A royal servant carrying the royal handkerchief remained close to the young prince.

"Achooooo!"

At last Prince Linstrom looked down and on the curb he saw a lovely young girl holding a small red pot in her arms.

"What is your name?" asked the prince as he smiled at her.

"Elena, your majesty," she replied and curtsied low.

The prince took the pot of dirt with its small green plants and examined it closely. He was amazed.

"Not a snuffle! Not a sneeze!" cried the prince. "Not a flower either!"

Elena smiled proudly at the prince's approval.

"But, your majesty, it has no flower! No flower at all!" whispered the court advisors.

Tears filled Elena's eyes. Now she would not go home carrying all the gold. Her father would not have Teezeberry pie for breakfast, lunch, and supper.

"It is certainly original," murmured the prince as he looked at the leafy shoots. His nose didn't twitch. His eyes didn't water. He didn't sneeze.

"It is lovely, too." With that the prince placed the large royal blue-ribbon upon the little red pot.

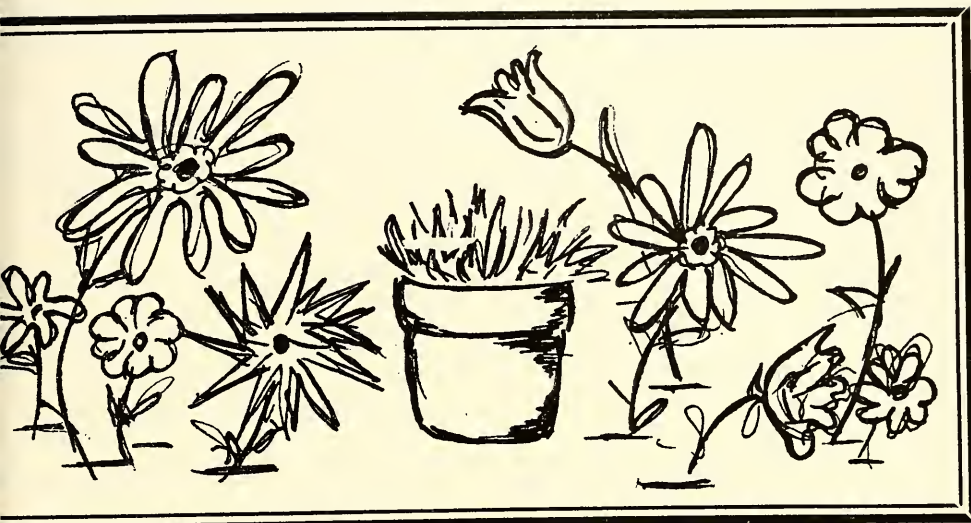
Immediately the entire village surrounded Elena. Elena handed a small piece of the plant to each of the villagers. With a loud cheer all the people disappeared—dashing here and there to plant the new Royal Flower.

Elena gathered all the gold that she could carry and with the help of the prince she climbed into the royal coach.

"My dear Elena, what shall we call the plant? It must have a name," said the prince.

"Your majesty, I think that I would call it Grass. I would name it for a dear friend of mine," replied Elena.

So it was that long ago in the kingdom of Eutopia, Grass began



to grow, and it grew, and grew, and grew until it crossed the high mountains and covered the slopes, the valleys, the plains, and the meadows of the whole world.

Of course, Grassinkle, the magician, was allowed to return to the village. He was appointed the Royal magician.

Prince Linstrom married lovely Elena. The king recovered from his dreadful cold, and Elena's father lived happily ever after—eating Teezeberry pie for breakfast, lunch, and supper.



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